

## Reminders

- ◆ On December 5, 2008, City Ordinance 32.04.01 through 32.04.15 went into affect. This ordinance requires owners of Pit Bull Dogs and cross breeds to register with the Animal Control Center on Otter Road. There is a \$25 fee per dog. Failure to comply with this ordinance may result in seizure of your dog plus court costs. You may view a copy of the ordinance on the Police Department web page at [www.sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.sturgis-sd.gov).
- ◆ 2008 IRS Publications & forms are available in the lobby at City Hall.
- ◆ Registration for Swimming Lessons at the Community Center will be held March 16-20, lessons begin on March 23.
- ◆ Municipal elections will be held on Tuesday, April 14.

## Announcements and Meetings

NEW TIME

**Sturgis City Council:** March 2 and 16. Council meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. at the Sturgis Community Center 1401 Lazelle Street. Council agendas and minutes can be viewed on-line at [www.sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.sturgis-sd.gov).

**Parks Board:** March 10 at 7:00 p.m. at Morman Law Firm 850 Main Street.

**Planning and Zoning:** March 10 and 31 at 6:30 p.m. in the downstairs conference room at City Hall.

**MUB Board:** March 11 at 8:00 a.m. in the downstairs conference room at City Hall.

**Arts Council:** March 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the downstairs conference room at City Hall.

**Future Sturgis Presentations:** March 26 at 6:30 in the Community Center Theater.

## Officials

### Mayor

Maury LaRue 347-4422

### Council Members

Ward One:

Mark Chaplin 720-3792

Ward Two:

Sherry Scudder 720-2768

David Hersrud 347-5061

Ward Three:

Clint Brengle 720-0171

Jamie McVay 720-5780

Ward Four:

Dane Sundstrom 490-1172

Bernadette Usera 720-9424

### City Manager

Dave Boone 347-4422

## Library Chosen as Northern Hills Friends of the Community



The Sturgis Library staff along with members of the Library Board and Friends of the Library were recently recognized as *Northern Hills Friends of the Community* by KNOLOGY Corporation and the Northern Hills Federal Credit Union.

The award is given to individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations who are recognized as being dedicated to enriching lives through volunteer, charity, or other community involvement. In addition to a plaque, the library received gift certificates to local businesses that will be used for various library programs.

## Understanding Property Taxes

I know this is one of your least favorite subjects to read about however after talking with many residents I would like to shed a little light on your property tax bill and what the City is doing to help reduce it. Meade Schools, Meade County and the City use property tax dollars to provide services that citizens want; a safe place for their family to live with good schools and a high quality of life. There are three steps to determine the property taxes for the School, County and City.

The first step is for the Meade County Assessor to reflect the market value of all property based on comparable sales. The actions of people buying and selling real estate in Sturgis determine market value. These individual selling prices are compared to their individual assessment. From these individual sales, a sales to assessment ratio is calculated. (Home sells for \$150,000 but is only assessed at \$126,000 gives the sales to assessed ratio of 84%). It is this ratio which determines the level of assessment in Sturgis. All property is to be assessed at or near market value by state law. Those areas that are not over 85% of market or not "equalized" with other like property must be reappraised by the local assessor. The assessor can

make individual adjustments on a case by case basis or by property class and on a neighborhood or community wide basis depending on the market activity in the area. With 97 market sales occurring in Sturgis last year the level of assessment appeared to be less than 84%, but at least a 6% average upward adjustment is needed to "equalize" Sturgis with the other communities in Meade County according to the Meade County Assessor. Other properties throughout Meade County are currently assessed on average near 90%.

The second step is to determine the amount of taxes needed to meet the costs of operating the Schools, the County and the City. The higher the cost of operating the School district, the County or the City, the larger the revenues required from property taxes. The School District, County and City then send their revenue budget request to the County Auditor that are not funded from other sources such as federal grants. This is why economic development is so important to the City; the more the City grows, the lower the property tax burden per resident. The more our sales tax grows, the less we depend on property taxes.

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(Property Taxes continued from page 1)

The third step of establishing a tax rate to apply to individual properties for the School, County and the City, is based on steps one and two. The tax rate for all property in the City is arrived at by dividing the value of all the property into the amount of the budget that is unfunded from other sources. This calculation results in a tax rate expressed in dollars of property value. So in the case of the City our request of \$2,560,394 divided by the total assessed valuation in the City of \$320,874,078 equals 0.0079.

Last year the City's rate was .008506 so the City was able to reduce our tax rate by 0.00053. It is the City goal to continue to reduce the tax rate through growing the sales tax based through economic development and improving our efficiency and cutting unnecessary costs.

So for a home of \$150,000 that is assessed at \$126,000 breakdown would look like this:  
School: \$126,000 X 0.0087 = \$1096.20  
County: \$126,000 X 0.0058 = \$730.00  
City: \$126,000 X 0.0079 = \$995.40

Your tax bill is a factor of three units of local governments; Meade Schools is 39%, Meade County is 26% and the City of Sturgis is 35% of your total tax bill. It is important to understand that the City continuously reviews programs and services to find opportunities to improve the efficiency, reduce costs and save money. For example our Purchasing Program saved the City over \$119,000 on the re-bidding of the new soccer lights this year. We regularly assess program efficiency to find opportunities to save costs so as to request only the dollars we need to provide quality services to you, our residents.

*Dave Boone*  
*Sturgis City Manager*

### Are you feeling computer challenged?

Basic computer classes for beginners are being offered free of charge at the Sturgis Public Library. You can learn the skills necessary to navigate the internet and other basic computer programs in a fun and relaxing atmosphere. Contact the Library at 347-2624 for registration information.



Mark your calendar and plan to participate in the City Wide Garage Sale on Saturday, May 2, followed by the City Wide Clean Up event the week of May 4 - 8.

Watch for details in next month's newsletter or visit the *News and Announcements* section of the Sturgis website at [www.sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.sturgis-sd.gov).



## Community Groups Partner with Law Enforcement

In an effort to stop illegal, under-age drinking in Meade County, the Sturgis Police Department, Meade County Sheriff's Department, and the Community Based Coalition Action for the Betterment of the Community (ABC) will be making random checks on businesses that serve alcohol. Law enforcement will also be setting up DUI checkpoints and offering Responsible Server Training for the public.

By conducting random compliance checks throughout the county, law enforcement is able to provide education to those who potentially could break the law and sanctions to those who do.

These activities are made possible by a Drug Free Communities granted partnership between ABC and the Sturgis Police Department and the Meade County Sheriff's Department.



## Recycling Saves Money

In 2008, the Public Works Department hauled 78.37 tons of cardboard to Belle Fourche for recycling. By not sending the cardboard to the landfill, the City saved \$2,986.86 in tipping fees.

If you have cardboard to be disposed of, please call our office at 347-3916. We will schedule a pick up at your location. Newspapers stacking up? The semi-trailer parked at the rear of the Liquor Store parking lot serves as a collection point for newspapers. In 2008, we recycled 75.42 tons of newspaper saving \$2,874.26 in tipping fees.



By recycling, you not only help the City save money, you also help the environment.



Be sure to visit our new City Storm Water Program page on our website at [www.sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.sturgis-sd.gov) where you will find educational materials and information about the City's projects with *Run Off Management Practices* for that site. Your comments are appreciated.

*Eric Tibbetts, Water Superintendent*

## Community Survey Coming Soon

The March issue of the Sturgis Information Publication will contain a survey. It is the goal of the City Manager's Office to collect feedback from citizens of Sturgis regarding several different issues.

Citizen surveys are commonly used in the planning process for municipalities through out the nation. Personal information associated with the survey is kept confidential. As an incentive to take the 3-5 minute survey, residents will receive a \$3.00 credit to their sanitation bill. Surveys will need to be completed and turned in to City Hall by May 1. A summary of the survey results will be available from City Hall and on line at [www.Sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.Sturgis-sd.gov).

## New City Website is Live

The City of Sturgis' web site has taken on a whole new look. The previous site had been in use since 1995 and was lacking many of the features that users have come to expect from a municipal web site.

In mid-February the new site designed by CivicPlus Inc. replaced the previous web site at [www.Sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.Sturgis-sd.gov).

The new site provides users with current information such as Council agendas, newsletters, maps, publications, emergency bulletins, employment postings, and other interactive features.

According to Dave Boone, City Manager, "One of the features we are really looking forward to using is the Citizens Request Tracking feature called "Sturgis Listens" that will allow users to submit requests on-line and will enable City staff to monitor and track those requests to make sure they are addressed quickly and efficiently".

Everyone is encouraged to take some time and explore the new site as it contains information of interest to everyone in the community.



## New Parking/Storage Ordinance in Effect

The City Council recently passed ordinance 16.05.11 which prohibits parking or storage of any trailer, recreational vehicle, implement, vehicle or other personal property on any public right-of-way. This ordinance includes the following:

- Leaving any car, pick up, motorcycle, camper or RV in any public right of way for more than five (5) consecutive days;
- Leaving any farm tractor, implement, trailer, truck or truck tractor in any public right of way for more than twenty four (24) hours; or
- During the period of July 20 - August 15, leaving any RV or camper in any public right of way for more than twenty four (24) hours.

Items being stored in violation of this ordinance will be subject to fines and the vehicle will be towed by the Police Department. Special permission for temporary storage needs may be granted in advance from the Police Department.

For more information call the Sturgis Police Department at 347-5070.

## Contact Information

*City Manager 347-4422*  
*Community Development 347-4424*  
*Finance Office 347-4422*  
*Human Resources 347-4422*  
*Rally Department 720-0800*  
*8:00 - 5:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*1040 2nd Street*

*Community Center 347-6513*  
*5:00 - 9:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*8:00 - 8:00 Sat.*  
*Noon - 8:00 Sun.*  
*1401 Lazelle Street*

*Fire & Ambulance 347-5801*  
*Emergency 911*  
*7:00 - 5:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*1901 Ball Park Road*

*Library 347-2624*  
*8:30 - 7:00 Mon. -Thu.*  
*8:30 - 5:00 Fri.*  
*8:30 - 4:00 Sat.*  
*1040 2nd Street*

*Liquor Store 347-5983*  
*8:00 - 10:00 Mon. - Sat.*  
*10:00 - 8:00 Sun.*  
*1075 Lazelle Street*

*Parks Department 347-9018*  
*8:00 - 5:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*1040 2nd Street*  
*Shelter Reservations call*  
*347-4422*

*Police Department 347-5070*  
*Emergency 911*  
*1400 Main Street*

*Public Works 347-3916*  
*7:00 - 4:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*1057 Dudley Street*  
*Rubble Site*  
*8:00 - 5:00 Tue. - Fri.*  
*8:00 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 5:00*  
*Mon. and Sat.*

*Water Department 347-4425*  
*7:00 - 5:00 Mon. - Fri.*  
*After Hour Emergency call*  
*Police Dispatch 347-2573*

[www.sturgis-sd.gov](http://www.sturgis-sd.gov)